



NOTES FROM THE:

Professional Military Comptroller School

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The DoD Professional Military Comptroller School (PMCS) offers a premier Financial Management Course. As the PMCS Navy faculty member, the question of what makes this school and course so unique often arises. In the current environment where resources are shrinking, where time is limited, and where responsibilities are increasing, choosing which professional education school to attend becomes paramount to our success. If you must be away from the workplace for six weeks, you want to make sure the course you choose is worthwhile and career enhancing. There is not a clear-cut answer to what makes PMCS special. If you poll previous PMCS graduates, you are likely to get many different responses (i.e., enjoyed hearing/meeting senior-level financial managers, loved finally seeing the big picture, networking with senior service representatives was great, socializing with fellow students was wonderful, etc.). However, my response to the question usually begins with talking about goals. Yes, setting goals is an age-old topic, but still a relevant one. People generally develop goals in six areas of life: Family and Home, Financial and Career, Spiritual and Ethical, Physical and Health, Social and Cultural, and Mental and Educational. Goals give you direction, purpose, and a reason to get up early in the morning and go to bed late at night. Not having them is similar to sailing a ship across the Atlantic Ocean without a map. As naval officers, we learn that it is not an impossible task, but the journey would be extremely long and difficult. Goals, like maps, help you to get to your destination much faster than sailing through life aimlessly. For financial managers, PMCS is a map to assist you in accomplishing three of life's goals. Those goals are Career, Education, and Physical/Health. You are probably wondering how can this be possible. Well, let us take a look at how the PMCS course is structured. To assist you in the Career and Education areas, there are at least 70 guest speakers who support PMCS. They provide the big picture: senior-level briefings that help students understand how money, programs, DFAS, acquisition, etc., works DoD-wide. Students ask questions and learn from the professionals what has happened and what is projected to happen in financial management. Educationally, PMCS has en-

hanced its program by now covering 85% of the Certified Defense Financial Management Exam (CDFM). Those areas included: Module 1: Management and Internal Controls, Manpower Management, Personnel Management, Defense Resource Management Environment, and Government Resource Management Environment; Module 2: Business Management Process Improvement, Cost and Economic Analysis, and Planning, Programming, and Budgeting; and Module 3: Accounting, Finance, Auditing, and Fiscal Law. This information is creatively covered through a combination of guest speakers, faculty instructors, and student seminars. Further, seminars are conducted to enhance the student learning process by giving them the opportunity to do hands-on projects and lead guided discussions.

PMCS is unlike any other financial management course in that it also has a module to help students improve their whole-person. You are probably thinking—what does this mean? Most people spend their time focusing on educational/career needs, but forget about their physical well being (i.e., exercise and eating properly) and emotional equilibrium (i.e., relaxation, stress management, etc.). You are now probably thinking—how does PMCS accomplish this arduous task? At PMCS, students are introduced to Dr Kenneth Coopers Program for Total Well-Being. In this program, the athletic student learns to refine their already established program. The on/off again exercise student learns to acquire a more consistent program. Finally, the have-never-exercised student learns how to establish a well-balanced program. This is all accomplished through a specialized group of guest speakers who are experts in nutrition, exercise, and emotions to educate our students. Students are encouraged to participate in both individual and group physical activities (i.e., aerobics, biking, bowling, volleyball, walking, etc.). Information is also provided so that students requiring a personalized (one-on-one) analysis can contact an Exercise Physiologist or a Personal Trainer.

As a PMCS graduate, you will notice some significant life changes. These changes will vary de-

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pending on how effectively you listen and take advantage of the opportunities provided. You will notice an increase in your energy level as you begin to live your life with passion—the passion that accomplishing a meaningful goal will give you. You will be in control of your life and the direction you are heading (career-wise). Tom Hopkins, an American motivator, once said, Success is the continuous journey towards the achievement of predetermined worthwhile goals. Let PMCS be your goal and the key to a successful career in financial management. The PMCS course is offered six times per year. As past graduates of this school have said many times, it was a worthwhile challenge that you never regret accepting and accomplishing.

